



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 8, 2012

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Rida T.R. Cabanilla, Chair
House Committee on Housing

Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair
House Committee on Human Services

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Director

SUBJECT: **H.B. 1734 – RELATING TO THE HOMELESS**

Hearing: Wednesday, February 8, 2012; 10:00 a.m.
Conference Room 325, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of H.B. 1734 is to appropriate funds for FY2012-2013 to establish a safe haven program to provide overnight shelters for homeless persons on state-owned surplus or open or vacant locations.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the efforts of the Legislature to seek solutions to the challenges of homelessness, however, we must respectfully oppose H.B. 1734 which would appropriate funds to provide safe havens utilizing surplus or vacant locations.

Designating areas in which to herd the homeless, especially those with mental health and addiction issues, sidesteps the issue of those people needing services oriented to recovery and healing.

Historically in other locations across the county, such set-asides of public spaces incur significant neighborhood resentment and become major challenges to undo when funding or public support is no longer available. Once this type of "programming" has been established and utilized by the severely disadvantaged, it will be very difficult to undo.

The Department is also concerned about the cost of the amenities included in this proposed legislation, and the impact on current levels of funding for homeless programs. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this proposed legislation.

HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

677 Ala Moana Boulevard, Suite 702 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: (808) 531-2198 Fax: (808) 534-1199

Web site: <http://www.hysn.org> E-mail: info@hysn.org

Daryl Selman, President
Judith F. Clark, Executive Director
Aloha House
American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii
Assistive Technology Resource Ctrs. of HI
Bay Clinic, Inc.
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Honolulu
Big Island Substance Abuse Council
Blueprint for Change
Bobby Benson Center
Catholic Charities Hawaii
Central Oahu Youth Services Assn.
Child and Family Service
Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii
Domestic Violence Action Center
EPIC, Inc.
Family Support Hawaii
Friends of the Missing Child Center of HI
Hale Kipa, Inc.
Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.
Hawaii Behavioral Health
Hawaii Student Television
Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition
Hina Mauka Teen Care
Hui Malama Learning Center
Kahi Mohala Behavioral Health
Kama'aina Kids, Inc.
KEY (Kualoa-Heeia Ecumenical Youth)
Project
Kids Behavioral Health
Kids Hurt Too
Kokua Kalihii Valley
Kula No Na Poe Hawaii
Lanai Community Health Center
Life Foundation
Marimed Foundation
The Maui Farm, Inc.
Maui Youth and Family Services
Palama Settlement
P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.
Parents and Children Together (PACT)
Planned Parenthood of Hawaii
Queen Liliuokalani Children's Center
Kona Unit
REAL
Salvation Army Family Intervention Svcs.
Salvation Army Family Treatment Svcs.
Sex Abuse Treatment Center
Susannah Wesley Community Center
The Catalyst Group
The Children's Alliance of Hawaii
Waikiki Health Center
Women Helping Women
YouthVision
YWCA of Kauai

February 6, 2012

To: Representative Rida Cabanilla, Chair
And members of the Committee on Housing

Representative John Mizuno, Chair
And members of the Committee on Human Services

COMMENT ON HB1734 RELATING TO THE HOMELESS

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, is providing comments on HB 1734 Relating to the Homeless.


Runaway, homeless and street youth are an often overlooked segment of the homeless population and one that has unique needs and challenges. These youth are separated from their families and are living without adult support and guidance. Hawaii Youth Services Network's street outreach and shelter programs reach more than 700 runaway and homeless youth annually.

The proposed safe havens are not an appropriate place for minors who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian. Youth living in a large encampment of unrelated adults are at risk of physical or sexual abuse and exploitation.

In addition, it may not be legal to house minors in such a facility. State licensing regulations for youth shelters do not allow mixed populations of minors and adults. The rules do not even allow an 18 year old to live in a youth shelter with 16 and 17 year olds.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

ATTN: CHAIRS RIDA CABANILLA AND JOHN MIZUNO
Testimony Providing Comments on HB 1734, RELATING TO THE HOMELESS
February 8, 2012, 9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 325

Aloha,

The Leeward Housing Coalition respectfully provides the following opposition regarding HB1734 to locate safe haven(s) on the Leeward Coast.

The Leeward Housing Coalition for the past two years has been working towards efforts to address housing for the homeless and those who need truly affordable housing via rent or purchase.

We have analyzed the number of shelters provided on the Leeward Coast versus the number of individuals and families that continue to be un-sheltered. There has been significant progress made by all shelters on the numbers of individuals serviced and continuing progress is being made all the time through our Outreach workers who continually interface with our un-sheltered homeless and find solutions for their particular situations.

It is the belief of the Leeward Housing Coalition that the most productive efforts to be made are to provide more emphasis on permanent housing that our low to moderate income families can afford for themselves and to expand the current shelter services to include some consideration for pets (i.e. perhaps a kennel nearby for the pets to be visited while the people are working on their own situations, etc.)

The proposal as stated does not provide stability to the homeless by making them and their pets "re-locate" daily into and out of the safe haven. There are no considerations given to providing services to help guide individuals into a more permanent housed lifestyle.

Considering the overall picture of the homeless and houseless situation on the Leeward Coast, the number of shelters already located on the Leeward Coast, and the services already being provided within the shelters that help our homeless learn to become integrated into permanent housing, we respectfully oppose your proposal for consideration of a safe haven to be established on the Leeward Coast.

We have no position for establishment of safe havens in other communities as each community must analyze and consider for their own benefits whether a safe haven would work for the homeless that would reside there.



PARTNERS IN CARE

Oahu's Coalition of Homeless Providers

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF HB 1734: RELATING TO THE HOMELESS

TO: Rep. Rida T.R. Cabanilla, Chair; Representative Ken Ito, Vice Chair, and Housing Committee Members

TO: Representative John Mizuno, Chair; Representative Jo Jordan, Vice Chair, and Human Services Committee Members

FROM: Gladys Peraro, Partners In Care (PIC), Advocacy Committee Chair

Hearing: Wednesday, February 8, 2012, 10:00 a.m.; CR325

Committee Chair Cabanilla, Chair Mizuno, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition of HB1734, relating to the homeless, specifically safe havens. I am Gladys Peraro, Advocacy Chair for Partners In Care (PIC). Our coalition focuses on the needs of homeless persons and strategies to end homelessness. Partners In Care strongly opposes this bill as outlined, as it would appropriate already limited state funds to establish "safe havens" for use on vacant state-owned lands.

Partners In Care recognizes the difficulties homeless individuals and families with children face in securing safe and affordable shelter. It is our belief that appropriating state funding toward rehabilitating current vacant transitional and permanent housing opportunities for use as supportive housing, is a more viable and critical solution to providing shelter to the unsheltered, than providing temporary shelter at great expense to the citizens of the State of Hawaii. Funding for mental health services and Shelter Plus Care are other crucial supports that prevent people from becoming homeless as well as to stabilize them and keep them in affordable housing, rather than providing safe haven zones at which they will continue to remain vulnerable and homeless. Services outlined in HB1734 include pavilions with open walls and overhead protection, showers and toilets, potable water, coin-operated clothes washing machines and drying machines, lockers, security personnel, maintenance services for the safe haven sites, camping at safe havens sites at night, and a maximum of one pet. The intent of this bill appears to be to provide safe haven to individuals and families in need of shelter. However, adequate emergency shelter space is already in existence in the two highest impact areas on Oahu, urban Honolulu and the Leeward Coast.

Current data available through the Lawyers for Equal Justice (LEJ), outlining some eleven "safe haven / safe zones" around the United States, provide "key points" worthy of review. Most notably for this discussion are issues such as, "most encampments are in areas without any shelter bed availability, the legal status and government response to most encampments is ambiguous, most encampments are ad hoc. Additionally, there are security issues, logistics issues, liability insurance issues, and the more successful a 'temporary' village seems, the more it may eventually come to be accepted as permanent, thus distracting from the issue of creating affordable permanent housing."

Partners In Care is in opposition to HB1734, and we respectfully urge you to defer this bill.

Partners In Care, c/o Aloha United Way, 200 N. Vineyard Blvd. Suite 700
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

Partners in Care is a membership organization of homeless service providers, other service professionals, units of local and state government, homeless consumers, and other community representatives located in Hawai'i on O'ahu. It is a planning, coordinating, and advocacy body that develops recommendations for programs and services to fill gaps in the Continuum of Care on O'ahu.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, February 04, 2012 11:47 AM
To: HSGtestimony
Cc: robertscottwall@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1734 on 2/8/2012 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for HSG/HUS 2/8/2012 9:00:00 AM HB1734

Conference room: 325
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Scott Wall
Organization: Individual
E-mail: robertscottwall@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/4/2012

Comments:

It just makes sense. Programs are cheaper than jail or the hospital.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 05, 2012 11:49 AM
To: HSGtestimony
Cc: Brenda.Kosky@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1734 on 2/8/2012 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for HSG/HUS 2/8/2012 9:00:00 AM HB1734

Conference room: 325
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Brenda Kosky
Organization: Individual
E-mail: Brenda.Kosky@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/5/2012

Comments:
Very strongly support!

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 12:56 PM
To: HSGtestimony
Cc: toddhairgrove@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1734 on 2/8/2012 10:00:00 AM

Testimony for HSG/HUS 2/8/2012 10:00:00 AM HB1734

Conference room: 325
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Todd Hairgrove
Organization: Individual
E-mail: toddhairgrove@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 2/6/2012

Comments: